

[Mrs. Mary Jane Ward]

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FOLKWAYS

Wm. V. Ervin, P.W.

Glen Rose,

Somervell County,

District 8.

705 words.

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Consultant - Mrs. Mary Jane Ward, Glen Rose, Texas.

*1At the age of seventeen [Mrs. Ward*1?], then Mary Jane Wilson, came to Glen Rose from Waco in the company of Mrs. Billy Rogers in 1870. Mary Jane Wilson, an orphan, was employed by Mrs. Rogers as housekeeper. When nineteen years old Mary Jane married Perry Nickells, who died about two years later, leaving his widow and two young children. Mrs. Nickells then married L. J. Ward, who operated a mill manufacturing shingles. They lived as man and wife until thirty-two years later, when Mr. Ward died.

"When I was about fourteen, the year after the Civil War closed, I came with my father, my two younger sisters and brother, my father's brother and his wife and their two little children from Monroe, La., to Waco, Texas. We travelled in an ox wagon and brought bedding and other things with us. There wasn't room in the wagon for all nine of us to ride

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all the time, so I walked most of the 500 miles from Louisiana to Waco. We had plenty to eat, but we suffered some from bad weather. We often slept in the rain with nothing but a wagon sheet over us.

“My father had been near Waco the year before and made a crop and then come came to get us. When he got here with us , he started building a house, but he didn't have it finished when he took a congestive chill one Friday evening, and by evening of the next day he was dead. That left us children with nowhere to stay, and we had to get out and hunt homes. I lived in Waco awhile doing housework and getting whatever I could do like that I got the chance to come here to Glen Rose with Mrs. Rogers, and I came and I have been here ever since. I haven't been to Waco since then but once, and that was about thirty years ago. It's got to be quite a 2 place. I have never been out of this county long at time.

“When I came here Glen Rose was just a small place. People were scattered out around through the hills living in log cabins, pole pens we called them then.

“There was not much farming, and there was some cattle raised. There was some whiskey-making going on all the time. This was a pretty rough place then. There was one pretty bad sort of a man here then. His name was Tom Cochran. He was born raised in this country, and when he was a boy he went to work for a man on his ranch over in the edge of Bosque county. After a few years Tom come back near here and had a herd of cattle himself. They said he branded all his boss' cattle he could with his own brand. Everybody branded all the cattle he could find, and nothing was ever done about it. One time Tom Cochran caught eight or ten head of young cattle and branded them. He had a neighbor across the creek named McCamant. McCamant missed some of his cattle and went over and asked Cochran if he had seen any stray cattle. Cochran just laughed, and went and blurred his brand and put McCamant's brand on them and turned them back to McCamant. He didn't know he was branding his neighbor's cattle. That was all that was done about it.

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"My first husband's brother, Andy Nickells, was killed by the Indians. He was at home by himself. They killed and scalped him and burned and cut his body up."

"My second husband, [?] Mr. Ward, saw Tom Cochran kill a man in a billiard hall. But the first man Cochran killed was somewhere away out on the frontier in the west. He killed the man thinking he had considerable money with him, but he just had a check. They say Cochran had a hard cashing the check. They kept the case in court about six years when he killed the man in Glen Rose, but they never done anything with him. They say he lured off or stole several girls, nothing ever seemed to be done with him about it. "